

Erie-Lackawanna Railroad; Tunkhannock Viaduct  
Nicholson  
Wyoming County  
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-87

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PA,  
66-NICH,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

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Erie Lackawanna Railroad: Tunkhannock Viaduct

HAER No. PA-87

Location: Nicholson, Wyoming County, Pennsylvania

Date of Construction: 1915

Designer/Builder: A. Burton Cohen, designer; David W. Flickmir and Lincoln Bush, builders

Present Owner: Erie Lackawanna Railroad

Significance: When the Lackawanna Railroad's 39.6-mile Clarks Summit-Hallstead Cutoff in northeastern Pennsylvania was dedicated on Saturday, November 6, 1915, the 2,375-foot-long, 240-foot-high Tunkhannock Viaduct stood at its west end. The total excavation for the cutoff had amounted to 13,318,000 cubic yards, more than half of that rock; into its structures had gone 800,000 cubic yards of concrete. The Tunkhannock alone had required 1140 tons of steel, and 167,000 cubic yards of concrete containing 89,000 barrels or 1,093 carloads of cement.

More than 50 years after its building, the Tunkahannock Viaduct still merits the title of largest concrete bridge in America, if not the world. It has been compared to the nearly two-thousand-year old Pont du Gard in southern France; mainly because of its tall proportions and high semicircular main arches. Its moldings serve to break the vertical lines. The veneer that was applied to exposed surfaces at the top of Tunkhannock in the 1940s has started to peel away.

Transmitted by: Donald C. Jackson and Jean P. Yearby, HAER, 1985